

CLAIMS

Having thus described the invention, what is claimed is:

1. A system for conducting multiple-item search queries in a system for engaging in electronic commerce, comprising:

5 one or more central processing units;

system software for controlling said one or more central processing units;

storage means containing one or more databases with information regarding suppliers and products/services available for purchase;

one or more servers providing for Internet-based access and use of said system;

10 means for buyers of products/services to search for multiple products/services by entering a single search query;

means for providing search results with respect to said multiple product/service query, said search results being grouped and ranked by supplier based on which supplier has inventory for the greatest number of queried products/services.

15 2. The system of Claim 1, further comprising means for buyers to transmit requests for quotation to said system, means for said system to transmit requests for quotation to selected suppliers, means for suppliers to transmit quotations to buyers in response to requests for same.

20 3. The system of Claim 1, further comprising means for buyers to purchase goods/services by linking directly to supplier ordering systems.

4. A method for buyers and supplier of products/services to engage in commerce, comprising the steps of:

providing access to a searchable supplier products/services information database to search for desired items;

5 submitting in a single query search queries for multiple products/services;

providing search results for multiple products/services in response to said query, said search results being grouped and ranked by supplier based on which supplier has inventory for the greatest number of queried products/services;

receiving from buyers requests for quotation for goods/services directed to suppliers listed in said search results;

sending said requests for quotation to selected suppliers; and

sending to buyers supplier quotations submitted in response to said requests for quotation.

5. In a computerized system for electronic commerce comprising one or more central processing units, system software for controlling said one or more central processing units and storage means containing one or more databases with information regarding suppliers and products/services available:

a software application integrated thereto providing users of said application with means for submitting multiple product/service item search queries to said system and providing search results with respect to said multiple product/service item search queries that are grouped and ranked by product/service supplier based on which product/service supplier has inventory for the greatest number of queried products/service items.